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SEPTEMBER WEATHER AND CROPS NOV 1 1930

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, meteorologist, Weather Bureau, delivered through WRC and 37 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, October 1, 1930.

How-do-you-do, friends. I am glad, and I know you are that our weather chat this delightful autumn day can be in a more optimistic vein than during the dreadfully droughty months of the summer. You may recall that, at the close of August, the tide, so to speak, had apparently begun to turn, with the outlook more hopeful. During the first week in September good rains were general over much of the Great Plains, and beneficial showers were received in Missouri and parts of the Ohio Valley. The second week brought substantial rainfall over a much wider area, in fact, most States between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains, were relieved, though some important sections, principally Iowa, northern Illinois, Michigan, and parts of Ohio continued dry. The third week of the month was largely fair, with little additional rainfall in the droughty areas, and, at its close, the Southwest and certain sections of the interior valleys, again needed moisture. However, the rains during the last week of the month, in conjunction with the moisture received previously, again put the soil in rather good condition in most sections between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains, with relief to some additional areas that had continued dry, but at the same time a few States had insufficient rains, principally Oklahoma, parts of Texas and New Mexico, and some localities in the Lake region. In Iowa this week brought the heaviest and most general rains since about the middle of June, and much of the western Lake region received the first good rains in a long time.

As in previous weeks however, the rains did not extend east of the Appalachian Mountains, except in the case of a few local showers. Consequently the drought continues generally unabated in the middle Atlantic area, including principally the Piedmont of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and eastern West Virginia, while rain is still needed to the northward. When we consider the month of September, as a whole, the Southwest, Middle Atlantic States, and some north-central sections received less than half the normal rainfall, but in most other areas the falls were near or above normal, and at the close of the month the soil was in generally good condition, except where September rains had been deficient.

With the improved soil moisture, plowing and the seeding of winter grains made favorable progress the latter part of the month, except in the dry Southwest and Middle Atlantic States. In addition to the dryness in the Southwest, there was considerable drifting of soil by high winds. The Kansas wheat crop is now one-half to three-fourths seeded, and the early-sown fields have come up to good stands.

The corn crop is now largely safe from frost, except in a few sections where considerable is still green, principally in the east-central Great

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Plains and some lowlands of the Ohio Valley. Good progress is being made in cutting, where this method of harvesting is practised, and picking has begun in the Northwest, with some cribbing in the upper Mississippi Valley. In Iowa high winds have tangled much corn, which will make husking difficult as machines can not be used.

There was considerable interruption to cotton picking during the latter part of September, because of frequent rainfall over much of the belt, but temperatures were generally favorable. In the northeastern portion of the belt, and in Oklahoma, the weather was more favorable, and picking made good advance, as a rule. In some other portions there was considerable complaint of damage to staple by wetness, with some sprouting of seed. The cotton top crop this year is generally poor. Pastures show considerable improvement since the rains throughout the central valleys, but they remain generally poor in the Southwest and the middle Atlantic area, because of dryness.

At this time of year we are usually interested in the closing of the summer growing season by the occurrence of killing frost. The last week in September brought the first general killing frosts and freezing temperatures to the Northwestern States. They came later this year than normally in most of that area, as in an average year killing frost occurs about the middle of September, and by the first of October the frost line normally advances to extreme northwestern Iowa and central Nebraska. In the past killing frost has occurred in September as far south as the Ohio River, and central Missouri, and in North Dakota as early as the latter part of August. The lowest temperature of record in September is 9 degrees below zero, the record being held in both Colorado and Wyoming. The month of October usually brings frost and freezing weather to the great central valleys and far south as the northern parts of the Cotton Belt. The more southern portions of the country, however, usually do not have a freeze until the latter part of November.

Thus, as a rule, it takes the frost line, or line of freezing temperatures, about two months, or from the middle of September to the middle of November, to advance from the extreme northern to the extreme southern portions of the country. The northward advance in the spring is somewhat slower than this, and consequently, the normal growing season, or the time between the average date of last killing frost in spring and the first in fall, is nearly five months longer in the extreme south than in some northern sections of the country. Well, folks, our time is up, and we must say good-bye until next month.